



State of California
The Natural Resources Agency
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

NOTICE OF EXEMPTION

Project Title New Road 620 Shaded Fuel Break

Project Location Portions of Sections 27 and 28, T6S, R21E, MDBM

County Madera

Lead Agency California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

Contact Guy Anderson

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Project Description

The New Road 620 Shaded Fuel Break is part of a strategic fire defense system that is planned to provide fire protection to the Oakhurst Basin. The Eastern Madera County Fire Safe Council has been working with willing landowners in the area to create fuel breaks along roads and ridges that will be defensible against a fire coming out of the Chowchilla River canyon. The project area is on private property consisting of eight 5 to 20 acre parcels with homes and six full time residents. Topography can be characterized as rolling with most slopes below 35%. Federal lands border the northern boundary. The predominant fuel type is manzanita and oak woodland with scattered gray pine and Ponderosa pine. This project is designed to treat manzanita, small oaks, and other brush species for a minimum distance of 300 feet on one or both sides of Buckeye Gap Road. This project is designed to treat manzanita and other brush species throughout accessible areas of the property. The residual stand will consist of the healthiest and larger trees with canopy cover of 40% or more. No trees over 12" DBH shall be removed. A total of 30 acres is planned for treatment. Manual work will be the treatment method throughout the project. Overstory trees will be retained and all "ladder fuels" will be targeted for removal. Fuel treatments will include burning of hand piles and chipping. No heavy equipment will be allowed off the existing road system. Miami Creek bisects the project. A 40-foot no operation zone will be set on each side of the creek. This area is not included in the project area.

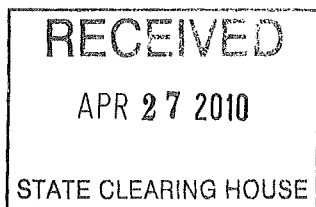
Exemption Status

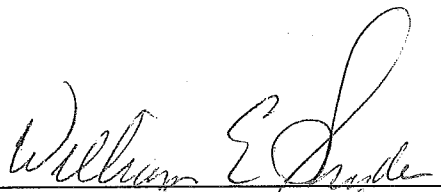
- ☒ Categorical Exemption Type/Section: Class 4 §15304 – Minor Alteration to Land
☐ Statutory Exemption (state code section):
☐ Ministerial (§21080(b)(1); 15268)
☐ Declared Emergency (§21080(b)(3); 15269(a))
☐ Emergency Project (§21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c))

Reasons Project is Exempt

This project fits within the description for a Class 4 Categorical Exemption pertaining to minor alterations to land. The project does not involve the removal of healthy, mature or scenic trees and will result in improvement in wildlife habitat. Project activities will not result in the taking of endangered, rare, or threatened plant or animal species or significant erosion or sedimentation of surface waters. No soil disturbance will occur near riparian areas or streams. All elderberry plants will be retained. Protection measures for documented cultural resources are contained in a confidential archaeological report. Field review by CAL FIRE staff confirmed that no exceptions apply which would preclude the use of a Notice of Exemption for this project. The Department has concluded that no significant environmental impact would occur to aesthetics, agriculture and forestland/timberland, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, land use planning, mineral resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation/traffic, or to utilities and service systems. Documentation of the environmental review completed by the Department is kept on file at CAL FIRE Unit Headquarters, 5366 Highway 49 North Mariposa CA 95338.

Date Received for Filing




William E. Snyder, Deputy Director Date 4/26/10
California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection